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Barbering & Cosmetology Facts

Manicure & Nail Salon Services

The cosmetology industry in California is the largest professional licensee population of any industry or profession in the country. The Bureau of Barbering and Cosmetology licenses and regulates the barbering and cosmetology industry, including manicure services. Bureau inspectors conduct inspections (routine, random, and complaint-driven) for the safety and protection of both consumers and the practitioner. As of May 2000, there were approximately 415,000 total licensees in California, which include 89,329 manicurists.

Cosmetologists and manicurists perform services that require them to actually “lay hands” on their clients. They use a variety of potentially hazardous substances in their practices — chemicals, sharp tools, and chemical procedures that alter hair, skin, or nails. The State of California requires barbers, cosmetologists, and manicurists to be licensed to protect the health and safety of the public.

Manicuring is the practice of cutting, trimming, polishing, bleaching, or cleansing the nails, or massaging, cleansing, treating, or beautifying the hands or feet of a salon client.

- California state law requires individuals to be licensed as a manicurist or cosmetologist to perform manicures or pedicures.
- Any establishment employing manicurists and cosmetologists must also be licensed by the state.

Consumer Tips

Before you accept any services at a salon, check out the shop first. Make sure:

- The establishment license is posted prominently in the reception area.
- Each operator's license is posted in plain view at his or her work station.
- The Bureau's Health and Safety poster is displayed in the reception area.
- The salon is clean:
 - ✓ The shop is free of trash and set with clean, sanitized instruments.
 - ✓ There is adequate ventilation for release of fumes created by artificial nail products, nail polish, or other chemicals.
 - ✓ Clean, fresh towels and implements are used for each client. The operator should put a clean towel (cloth or paper) on the workstation before starting the service.
- All bottles and containers are clearly labeled with the name of the contents.

A smart consumer is an empowered consumer.

The Bureau of Barbering and Cosmetology is the beauty service consumer's advocate. If you have questions or a complaint about a manicurist or a salon, contact the Department of Consumer Affairs' Consumer Information Hotline at **(800) 952-5210**. Or visit the Bureau's website at **www.dca.ca.gov/barber**.

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Disinfection of Equipment

Operators are required to disinfect all tools and instruments and wash their hands before working on a customer.

Improper disinfection of tools can spread disease and bacteria from one client to another.

- An operator should never use the same tools on you that were used on a previous customer, unless they have been properly disinfected.
- It's okay to ask how the operator disinfects the instruments.
- ***Don't risk your health!*** If a clean set of tools is not available for use on you, refuse the service.
- Look for clearly marked containers for disinfecting equipment and containers holding clean and soiled instruments.
- All items being disinfected must be completely immersed in an EPA-registered disinfectant with bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal activity.
- Any equipment that cannot be disinfected (nail buffers, emery boards, toe separators, orange sticks, etc.) must be disposed of immediately after use. Only metal instruments — with a few exceptions — can be disinfected.
- Operators should wash their hands with soap and water before touching clients' hands. Operators should also have clients wash their hands prior to the service.

Dangers and Health Risks

- Nail Fungi
- Allergic reaction
- Nail lifting or loss of nail
- Staph infections or viruses

Extreme/Rare Risks

- HIV
- Hepatitis B and C
- Tuberculosis/Cold/Flu
- Loss of finger or toe

Other Health Tips

If you are diabetic or have other health risks or medical conditions, notify your operator before having services performed. Diabetics have special health risks that make manicure or pedicure services dangerous. Cracks or fissures in the nail could cause infection or gangrene, or even result in the amputation of a finger or toe.

Warning Signs

- If the skin around the nail becomes painful, red, or inflamed, seek medical attention.
- If any part of the nail appears green or black, it could indicate an air bubble under the artificial nail where dirt or bacteria has accumulated. You should have the artificial nail removed if this occurs.
- Manicures and pedicures should never be painful.

Common Violations

- Employment of unlicensed operators
- Failure to properly sterilize tools and equipment
- Unsanitary conditions
- Use of illegal tools — used improperly, these devices can cause injuries requiring medical attention
 - ✓ Razor callous shavers (Credo blades)
 - ✓ Metal scrapers or graters
- Improper venting of toxic fumes